

Nadler, NYC Delegation, Nonprofit Leaders Protest Impact of Federal Budget Cuts on NYC Neighborhoods

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NEW YORK, NY - Today, Representatives Jerrold Nadler, Charles Rangel, Carolyn Maloney, Eliot Engel, Anthony Weiner, and Nydia Velazquez, and dozens of nonprofit leaders and advocates from across New York City voiced their strong opposition to the imminent federal spending cuts that will slash over \$38 billion from vital national programs, decimate funding for New York's hardworking community organizations, cut jobs and services, and destabilize local neighborhoods during the ongoing recession. With the imposition of an extremist GOP social and economic agenda, local leaders addressed the real world cost of the planned cuts.

Among the hundreds of critical local programs that will be drastically cut are:

- Community Development Block Grants, which provide vital services to low and moderate-income families and communities across the city. The grants fund career training, homeless shelters, assistance for victims of crimes, and help preserve affordable housing, among many other initiatives.
- Community Services Block Grants, which fight poverty, fund programs for youth, seniors, immigrants, and families, and spur community development.
- Workforce Investment Act, which provides job training and placement for tens of thousands of New Yorkers.
- Title I funding for Education for low-income kids.
- Head Start, which provides free childcare and educational programs for pre-school and kindergarten-aged kids.
- Child Care Development Block Grants, which provide childcare for low-income families.
- Women, Infants and Children (WIC), which provides food assistance, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income women, infants and children.
- Public Housing Capital Fund, which funds major capital needs for the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA).

"The Republican-imposed budget cuts for both 2011 and 2012 are the most radical I've ever seen and represent an all out war on the middle class, on low income people, on seniors, on kids, on anyone who's sick, and on anyone who thinks that the country ought to remain competitive and generate jobs," said Congressman Nadler. "The mythical obsession with balancing the budget and slashing spending is a mirage which merely conceals a violent imposition of austerity measures on those who can least afford them."

"Our nation's non-profits not only provide important social services to individuals and families, they also provide real jobs and economic resources to our communities," said Congressman Rangel. "Gutting these programs and pursuing plans to cut Medicaid, Medicare, and a variety of important investments in housing, health and the education of our children will not create jobs, but instead derail the slow economic recovery that is beginning to happen."

"If the Republicans had told the American public last fall that they would pass zero jobs bills and instead slash programs for seniors, women, and the poor, they would have been laughed out of Congress. This year's budget will cause untold suffering for women and children but won't create a single job. Next year's Republican budget proposal is even more extreme - it ends guaranteed Medicare for seniors to finance a giant new tax cut for corporations, and would add trillions to the deficit over the next ten years. This isn't a recipe for a balanced budget, it's a recipe for disaster," said Congresswoman Maloney.

"The GOP budget proposed for FY2012, and the FY2011 cuts proposed in the current continuing resolution, are collections of the greatest hits for conservative goals over the last few decades. They may present these under the veil of fiscal conservatism, but make no mistake, the Republicans do not want to balance the budget responsibly, they want to do it on the backs of low- to middle-income families, the elderly and the disabled," said Congressman Engel.

"The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates show that the Republican budget will double Medicare beneficiary premiums and cost-sharing for seniors and persons with disabilities entering the program in 2022, and nearly triple those costs by 2030. It slashes education and workforce development and protects Big Oil, billionaires and companies who outsource. These are not policies and values I can support, and believe are not supported by most Americans."

"The GOP budget is not about debt reduction, it's about increasing the dangerous inequities in our economy and society," said Congressman Weiner. "It is an assault on the middle class and those struggling to make it."

"All Americans want a government that protects its citizens, especially when they are vulnerable and in need, said William Rapfogel, CEO of the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty. "Sadly, the frail elderly, families in crisis and disadvantaged children are facing a punishing loss of services as the Federal budget is being sliced and diced. New Yorkers are especially targeted with dramatic reductions of emergency food assistance, block grants, jobs programs and other benefits. It is likely that my organization, the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty, will be forced to dramatically reduce the number of households we serve each month at our food pantries from 15,000 to less than 10,000; our crisis staff would be cut in half; our employment and career counseling programs by more than 50%; staff at our more than 1500 housing units would be reduced by 75% and the services we provide to needy households who have been on a road towards independence (and improving the New York economy) would become less efficient."

"Our Community Services Block Grant dollars allow the Urban Justice Center to operate a legal clinic in West Harlem. At the clinic we are able to serve the most vulnerable NYC residents by assisting them with food stamps, Medicaid, cash assistance and eviction prevention services," said Lori McNeil, Director of Research and Policy for the Urban Justice Center's Homelessness Outreach and Prevention Project.

"Cutting this essential funding would punish the needy, and ultimately, all New Yorkers," said Judi Orlando, Executive Director of Astella Development Corporation. "It would mean that our organization could not assist people with housing problems, educate tenants and landlords on their responsibilities and rights, assist homeowners on obtaining mortgages, foreclosures prevention and maintaining their homes. This would lead to deteriorating housing, increased homelessness, and many more people who would not be able secure the services they need to get by in our city."

"New York City is in the midst of a serious housing crisis, with hundreds of distressed buildings that suffered the impact of predatory equity investment," said Emily Goldstein of the New York State Tenants and Neighbors Coalition. "Cuts to CDBG, which funds city code enforcement efforts and neighborhood organizations doing foreclosure counseling, eviction prevention, and other crucial on-the-ground work, would have a devastating impact on tenants in these buildings throughout the city."

"It would be cruel and counterproductive to cut national service and education programs like AmeriCorps or nutrition programs such as WIC and food stamps during the best of times, but is it truly unfathomable to do so in what is still a deep recession for most Americans. If these cuts go through, not only will they add to mass suffering, they will contribute to additional jobs losses," said Joel Berg, Executive Director of the New York City Coalition Against Hunger.

Community organizations present today, all of which will be affected by the cuts, included:

- • The Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty
- • Urban Justice Center
- • Hudson Guild
- • The Jewish Community Council of Greater Coney Island
- • Astella Development Corporation
- • Catholic Charities Community Services
- • New York State Tenants and Neighbors Coalition
- • Brooklyn Chinese-American Association
- • New York City Coalition Against Hunger
- • Goddard Riverside Community Center
- • Pa'lante Harlem
- • Children's Aid Society
- • Harlem 4 Center for Change
- • YouthBuild East Harlem
- • The Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center
- • Alianza Dominicana
- • Community Healthcare Network
- • Center for Children's Initiatives
- • American Association of Jews from the Former USSR
- • West Side Campaign Against Hunger
- • City Year
- • Harlem RBI
- • United Neighborhood Houses

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